

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Republican Leadership Leads to Record-Breaking Graduation Rate

*Florida's Graduation Rate Tops a Record-Breaking 80 Percent, Minority Students Continue To
See Gains*

Tallahassee, Fla. – Florida House Majority Leader Carlos Lopez-Cantera (R-Miami) today commented on Florida's graduation rate reaching record numbers this year.

“In the face of the state's great fiscal challenges, it is clear that our Republican-led legislative efforts to emphasize accountability for our students and teachers are producing results in Florida's schools,” stated Leader Lopez-Cantera. “Our goal has always been to give every child the opportunity to succeed. With higher standards and more accountability, our teachers and students have shown they have the ability to reach these goals and succeed.”

According to results released today from the Florida Department of Education, Florida's graduation rate has risen to its highest level ever, continuing a six-year upward trend despite a challenging budget year. Hispanic and African-American students continue to graduate at higher levels, with Hispanic students increasing graduation rates 13 percentage points since 2006-07, and African-American students increasing 11.5 percentage points during the same timeframe. Overall, the Sunshine State's graduation rate rose more than one full percentage point to 80.1 percent, up from 79.0 percent last year and up nearly 10 percentage points since 2006-07.

“The legislature's continued focus is student learning growth as we work to prepare our state's students to compete in a global economy,” continued Leader Lopez-Cantera. “While all students are making strides, Florida's minority students have made significant gains, continuing the effort to close the current achievement gap in our state. While there is still much work to do, we can be proud of the hard work of administrators, teachers, support staff and parents, who are integral in our students' success.”

Following the upward progress in graduation rates, Florida's dropout rate also declined for the sixth straight year to 1.9 percent. This is the first time the state's dropout rate has fallen below two percent, and the rate represents a decline of 0.1 percentage points from last year and a decrease of 1.7 percent since 2006-07.

To view the state and district graduation and dropout rates, please visit
<http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/pubstudent.asp>.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:

Orlando Sentinel: Florida high school graduation rate is highest ever

"Florida's high school graduation rate climbed again and hit another all-time high this year at 80.1 percent, the state announced this morning... Hispanic students, who nationally often have the lowest graduation rate of any racial or ethnic group, have made some of the biggest gains in Florida."

St. Petersburg Times: Florida's high school graduation rates rise again

"Florida's high school graduation rate ticked up again this year, rising to 80.1 percent from 79.0 percent last year, according to state figures released Monday. Since 2006, Florida's rate has steadily climbed from 68.9 percent. The rates were also up this year in each of the four Tampa Bay area districts."

Associated Press: New figures show 8 out of 10 Florida high school students get their diplomas

"Florida's high school graduation rate continues to rise. Figures released Monday by the Florida Department of Education show the graduation rate increased to 80 percent in the 2010-11 school year. That number is one percent higher than the previous year, and nearly 10 percent higher than in the 2006-07 school year. Hispanic students saw the greatest gains, rising two points to 77 percent."

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